

make a wish

eddiespaghetti (foxwatson)

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Summary:

Eddie was the reason Richie had seen The Breakfast Club and Pretty in Pink more than once - and he was the reason they'd ever watched Sixteen Candles.

He wasn't sure if anyone else in the group had watched it or not, so when Richie showed up at school on his sixteenth birthday and said, "They fucking forgot my birthday," Eddie thought it might be a joke just for him, but he couldn't be certain.

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As much as they did love to all hang out together, there were times parts of the Losers Club had broken off on their own, and Eddie tended to find himself, at those times, hanging out with Richie. The two of them just ended up together when no one else could hang out. Just like Eddie had known that when Bev was there she and Bill had broken off and hung out on their own - only, well. Not quite like that. Maybe.

The point was that Richie's parents, shitty as they were, didn't really care if Eddie just sort of showed up and didn't leave. He couldn't be gone from home too long, but especially after that summer, the summer of '89, he just needed a night out of the house sometimes and he would go to Richie's. He and Richie had gone to the arcade sometimes (not that Eddie would ever touch an arcade machine without at least several wet wipes involved), or to the theater, so they'd hung out without everyone else. Going to Richie's just made sense. Mostly.

Anyways, Bill's parents were better and worse after everything had happened with Georgie, and Stan was always scared his dad would throw a fit, whether he would or not, but Eddie was always welcome at Richie's, whenever. One time he'd woken up in the middle of the night and ridden his bike over at 3 in the morning and Richie had just still been up reading comics.

Sometimes they'd just sit around in the quiet, but eventually they started watching movies. Richie had a tv in his room, and he'd taken his family's VCR and they hadn't noticed, so he and Eddie both would buy tapes or rent them and watch them whenever they hung out. At first Eddie had always let Richie pick, stupid comedies or his other favorites like Ghostbusters, but eventually Eddie started making suggestions, too, and Richie let him.

Eddie was the reason Richie had seen The Breakfast Club and Pretty in Pink more than once - and he was the reason they'd ever watched Sixteen Candles.

He wasn't sure if anyone else in the group had watched it or not, so when Richie showed up at school on his sixteenth birthday and said, "They fucking forgot my birthday," Eddie thought it might be a joke just for him, but he couldn't be certain.

"Are your grandparents coming by later with Long Duk Dong, too?"

Richie cracked a smile at that, and Eddie smiled back - only then Richie got that look in his eye that Eddie always came to regret. "Hardly need my grandparents to come by for Long Dong to be in the house, do I?"

Stan groaned, and Bill sighed, while Ben smiled a little.

Eddie just said, "Jesus, Rich, don't get started, I'm trying so hard to be nice to you on your birthday." Then he frowned. "Were you being serious, though?"

"Me? Serious? No, of course not, just havin' a good time, Eds."

"God, don't call me that."

Richie slung an arm around Eddie as they all walked into school, and Ben started talking about something he'd been working on for history. Eddie shot Richie another questioning glance, because he could tell something was off, but he figured he could ask about it later.

Later didn't come until lunch, but when it did, Eddie finally found he had a moment alone with Richie.

"Rich... Were you just referencing the movie when you came in this morning?"

"Uh, when I what?"

Eddie sighed and nudged Richie's arm. "When you came in this morning, you said they forgot your birthday. Was there really a they?"

He watched Richie grimace, and he knew immediately he was right. Eddie almost regretted bringing it up, suddenly. "Oh. Yeah. Just... my

parents. I'm actually living fucking Sixteen Candles, except without the excuse of my sister's wedding, but. It's no big deal."

"Your sister didn't tell you we're getting married tomorrow?"

It was lame, taking a page out of Richie's book and just cracking a joke, but it got Richie to smile, and that was all that mattered to Eddie.

"Yeah, don't worry, Eds, your mom and I will be right there in the front row."

"Alright, chill out with the mom jokes and nicknames, I can only ignore so much for the sake of birthday kindness. But... Look, we'll do stuff with all the losers tonight, who cares about your parents?"

"Yeah... yeah. You're right." Richie looked distant for a second, then shook himself. "You think Jake Ryan'll show up?"

Eddie flushed a little and laughed, but he knew it sounded awkward, or possibly slightly hysterical. Richie seemed to have less and less issue making jokes like that. While he'd always made weird flirtatious and sexual jokes about girls -since he was like 12 - Richie had recently decided that he was free to include flirty jokes about guys in his repertoire, too. Eddie found that he almost had a heart attack every time it happened. If he were younger, his reaction might have even made him reach for his inhaler, but ever since he'd thrown away all his meds when Greta Keene told them they were bullshit, he didn't use any of them anymore.

The thing was, Eddie knew why he reacted that way - he just didn't really want to think about it. He'd gotten pretty good at putting it off.

Fortunately, they got their food and got seated with everyone before Eddie had managed to stop laughing, so he didn't have to say anything.

Jake Ryan jokes aside, Eddie still spent the rest of lunch distracted. He had already been planning some things for Richie's birthday - but now he felt the need to make sure it was perfect. He'd need to talk to Bill at some point to really plan anything, and he'd have to run some

other errands, too, to put some extra touches on the rest of plans. Still. If it could cheer Richie up, make him forget his shitty parents and really grin again, it would all be worth it.

To do everything he needed to do, really, he'd have to skip out on class for most of the rest of the day. He never did that without Richie or the other losers egging him on.

There was a first time for everything after all.

The first thing he did after lunch was to catch up with Bill before he got into class.

"Bill, wait. I had some ideas for Richie's birthday tonight, but I need your help. Can you help?"

"Well, sh-sure. B-but what is it?"

"Right. I know we were all going to the quarry, but I think there's other stuff we could do instead. Ask Ben to get a projector if he can - he might be able to borrow one from the library. I'll get most of the other things - I need you to go to the barrens after school, take everyone else, too. Make it look nice, find a concrete wall or something. Bring blankets, too, for all of us to sit on. I'll leave all the stuff there, I'll take Richie so you have some time to get everything set up. And I might get you some extra help, too."

"E-extra help?"

"Can you do it?"

"Yeah, E-Eddie, o-of course. I-is there anything else?"

"No, just. Try and make things look nice, put the film on the projector. Everything will be waiting for you at the barrens. Just go to class, I'll see you later."

"Y-you're not c-coming?"

"Too much to do! Sorry, bye!"

The next was to sneak off to the school payphone. It was absolutely

disgusting, but Eddie was determined, and he knew if his mom caught him at home and using the phone instead of at school, he'd end up dead. He took some paper towels from the bathroom and wiped the phone off before he used it to call Bev's number in Portland.

He didn't think she'd be home, but apparently she'd been skipping school, too.

"Bev?"

"Eddie?"

"Oh, good, thank god. Okay, so. Hi! How are you?"

"Eddie, are you calling me at school?"

"I. Yes. Yeah, that's possible. You don't wanna tell me how you are?"

"I'm fine, Eddie. Is everything okay?"

"Oh! Oh, yeah, I mean. Nothing's really wrong or anything, just. It's Richie's birthday today."

"Oh yeah! Tell him happy birthday from me!"

"Well actually... Bev, you can drive, right?"

"...Eddie are you really asking me to drive back to Derry for Richie Tozier's birthday?"

"Bev, look. I know it's--"

Bev cut him off immediately. "Of course I will."

"...Really?"

"Eddie, Richie's one of my best friends. And I mean, honestly, I'd thought about it anyways, but I'm assuming there's a reason you wanted me to, isn't there?"

Eddie sighed. "His parents forgot his fucking birthday, Beverly. My mom's never been party planner of the year--"

"Yeah, neither was my dad, but. Yeah. I get it. I'll drive up. It'll take a few hours - when are you guys getting together?"

"Well, I had this idea... Just go to the barrens when you get here, Bill and everyone will probably still be setting up. They can explain everything. I'll see you when Richie and I get there."

"Oh, Richie and I, huh?"

Eddie blushed. Bev had always seemed to know more about himself than he did, in particular ways. "Bev, oh my god, not now."

She laughed through the phone, and Eddie smiled in spite of himself, glad to hear her again - as always, he hadn't even realized how much he missed her.

"See you, Eddie."

"Wait, one more thing! Bring your stereo, can you?"

"Yeah, of course. I'll bring that, too. See you."

"See you."

He hung up the phone and then wiped off his hands and the phone again. By this point, he'd found that the only way to get through anything like that was to distract himself as quickly as possible. He could swim in the quarry and not think about it because he was with his friends, and that was more important - in this case, Richie was more important. He'd be happy to see Bev - they'd gotten close before she left, always smoking cigarettes together and talking. Eddie didn't think Richie felt the way about Bev that Bill and Ben did, but he knew they were good friends, and that Richie would appreciate her being there.

With that all settled, Eddie got his things and managed to sneak his way out of the school - not that any of the adults in the school particularly cared. Not in Derry.

His errands began with sneaking into his own room at home to get his money, and a blanket. He'd been right that his mom would be home, so he had also been right to use the phone at school - he never

could have gotten to the phone in the house.

With his savings all gathered up, he proceeded on the rest of his afternoon errands. He picked up Richie's cake from the bakery - all the losers had pitched in on ordering it. He got some more food from the store, some battery powered lights to hang up in the trees, and some string and tape to help hang them up. He went to the music store and got some of Richie's favorite music - Eddie had made Richie a mixtape for his birthday, because they always exchanged mixtapes for holidays, but he didn't want to play that mixtape in front of everyone. The very thought of that made him a little flushed.

The last step was the most important - he had to go to the Capitol and see if he could get a copy of a movie. He knew the Capitol kept some of their reels, and they would show older movies, so if he could figure out who was the best one to ask, it was possible he could get a reel for his big plan.

The *only* person he knew to ask, really, was Foxy - which was what they all called the theater manager. Not to his face, but it was mostly an affectionate nickname.

Eddie snuck around the theater and found Foxy smoking in the alleyway, taking a break - timing was apparently on his side.

"Mr. Foxworth?"

The old man squinted at Eddie, and then snubbed his cigarette out on the wall beside him. "Kaspbrak. You here with that Tozier kid?"

"No. No, Richie isn't with me. Neither is anyone else. I wanted to ask a favor."

Foxy narrowed his eyes even further, which hadn't seemed possible, and then hummed. "Alright. What is it?"

"Do you still have Ghostbusters on reel? And if so would it. Be possible for me to borrow it? Just for tonight."

"We're not the damn video rental. Get lost."

"What if. What if I pay for it?"

The old man blinked at him. "How much?"

Eddie had about fifty dollars in savings that he'd decided he could spare. He offered Foxy thirty of it.

He glanced at the money, then back up at Eddie. "Fine. Give me the money, you can do whatever the hell you want with it."

Eddie handed over the thirty dollars, and Foxy went back into the theater. Eddie hovered awkwardly in the alleyway, hoping that was what he was expected to do, and he was pleasantly surprised when Foxy actually came back out with the reel tucked under his arm. He passed it over to Eddie, and the title on the front told Eddie that he hopefully had the right one.

"Bring it back if you want - I don't think anybody'll miss it, though."

Recognizing his luck, Eddie ran off with the reel before Foxy could change his mind. Difficult as it was, Eddie held the reel and all his other materials wrapped in a blanket on his lap as he rode his bike to the barrens. He did it without falling, and left everything somewhere he thought Bill could find it. He left a note, too, with some instructions for the film reel, and the lights, the food and the music.

After all that was done, he rode back to school on his bike, and made it just before classes let out. He waited by the bike rack and was glad to see that Bill was the first one out.

"Bill, thank god. Okay. Everything's waiting at the barrens, by the creek, I think you can find it. Bev's going to meet you there."

"B-bev's coming?"

"Yes, look. Get everyone together, head down there - I'm gonna take Richie to the arcade, but go ahead and find them, tell Richie you have a project to work on or something and you'll meet him down there."

Bill just nodded, and ducked back into the school. After a few minutes, Richie came out.

"Eddie my boy, where's everybody else?"

Richie hadn't even seen them. Eddie smiled. "Bill, Stan, and Ben had something they had to work on - something about that history project Ben was talking about. They're gonna meet us at the quarry later, but I thought we could go to the arcade first."

"The arcade? On my birthday? Does that mean you'll actually play with me?"

"We'll see." Eddie got on his bike, and Richie followed suit, and they smiled at each other as they rode off to the Capitol.

The only arcade in town was the small one in the theater lobby, but it was better than nothing. The losers all went there routinely - once for a very intense air hockey tournament where Richie had gotten hit in the face with a puck and ended up with a split lip. Eddie went there with Richie pretty regularly, too, even though he didn't always play. He'd only ever beaten Richie at Street Fighter once, but he'd never let him forget about it.

As soon as they got there, Richie dragged Eddie by the sleeve to one of the multiplayer shooting games - the one called *Beast Busters*.

"I've always wanted to play one of these through to the end. Let's get tokens and just feed it til we finish. Are you in?"

"It's your birthday. Of course I'm in," Eddie answered with a smile and a shrug.

Richie grinned back at him and set everything up while Eddie picked out his gun and cleaned it off. Sharing stuff with his friends was one thing - touching the same thing a thousand sweaty strangers had touched was still pretty unsettling territory.

When Richie came back, he fed the tokens into the machine and left a little pile on the machine in between them, for easy access.

It didn't surprise Eddie that Richie was fairly good at the game - Eddie had never seen him be bad at an arcade game. He was pleasantly surprised, though, to find that he wasn't half bad either. Maybe the game was just forgiving about aiming, but either way, Eddie held his own.

The only problem came as the difficulty increased, Richie kept getting distracted and shooting things on Eddie's side of the screen and then getting himself killed. When Richie had died for the third time, and Eddie still hadn't died once, he shot a very quick glare at Richie.

"Stop shooting things on my side of the screen, idiot, that's what keeps getting you fucking killed."

"But I can't let my little Eddie Spaghetti get hurt, can I?" Richie reached over and pinched Eddie's cheek, and Eddie swatted him off and immediately got killed in the game.

With a groan, Eddie started feeding in tokens. "Stop it, Rich, at least wait until the fucking game is over."

Richie smiled over at him, and Eddie sighed but smiled back, and they kept playing - and Richie still kept shooting at the things after Eddie, but Eddie shot things on Richie's side of the screen, too, and it seemed to even things out.

It took them over half an hour, but they finished the game. As the final story screens came up, Richie reached out for a hi-five, and Eddie gave him one for once - only then Richie's fingers slid between Eddie's, and he held on for a second, lingering. It couldn't have been as long as it felt - they weren't really holding hands in the normal sense - but even when Richie pulled away, his thumb dragged across Eddie's palm.

Eddie clenched his hand, still tingling with warmth, and brought it down by his side.

Richie finally looked away from the screen to give him another blinding smile, and Eddie smiled back, still rubbing his own thumb over his palm to try and rub the feeling away.

"Come on, let's play something else."

With the time they had left, Richie talked Eddie into multiple games of Street Fighter, a cautious game of air hockey, and even a few skee ball competitions. Eddie played pinball once, too, and Richie leaned

on the machine, watching him. Richie was terrible at pinball, because he always got overeager or bored and flicked the bumpers back and forth and ended up losing the ball - but he liked to watch all the funny stuff in the pinball machine get set off, so he liked to watch Eddie play.

If at some point in the afternoon Eddie had gotten so distracted that he forgot to keep disinfecting everything - well. Richie wasn't going to say anything. He knew better.

When they'd spent almost all of Richie's money at the arcade, Eddie looked at his watch. They still had some time to kill - he'd need another idea.

"You wanna go get some ice cream?"

"Eds, how long have you known me? How is that a question?"

"Right, great. Come on, then. Let's ride our bikes home first and then we'll walk back to get ice cream. Then we can walk with it to meet everyone."

Hopefully with the bike ride, the line at the ice cream shop, and the walking to the barrens instead of biking, it would give everyone plenty of time to get their shit together. Eddie could hope.

Once they were at the ice cream shop, Eddie told Richie to get whatever he wanted, and that he'd pay for it - and he still had to shove Richie out of the way to be able to pay for it.

"You sure know how to treat a gal, Eds," Richie said as they walked out of the shop. He had his free arm around Eddie's shoulders, which made it harder to walk, but Eddie couldn't bring himself to complain.

"Again, it's still your birthday. Don't be an asshole. Also, I'm still objecting to that nickname, just for the record. I still hate it."

"It just gets less and less convincing every time you say it."

Eddie rolled his eyes, but occupied himself with eating his ice cream. He'd gotten two scoops of vanilla - just enough to fill the cone and have a nice solid amount of ice cream to eat, still. Richie had gotten a

triple scoop of cotton candy, and just looking at it made Eddie's stomach hurt. It was also already dripping all over his hands, because he refused to get a napkin on the principle that it soaked up all the ice cream, and that was just a waste.

"So are we still meeting everyone at the quarry or are we going somewhere else? Or are you not allowed to tell me? Is it a surprise party?"

It was always still fascinating to Eddie that Richie still managed to talk so much even when he was eating. "How can it be a surprise party if you know the party's happening, dipshit? Also we're meeting everyone at the barrens, since you're so desperate to know."

"I've never been desperate in my life, Eddie Spaghetti."

Eddie snorted, but didn't dignify that with a response.

Richie was only quiet for a moment before he said, "Okay, I know it's been months but I still don't understand how Twin Peaks could just fucking end like that."

That conversation kept them going until they reached the barrens, bickering back and forth about the Black Lodge and what could have happened to Coop until they could hear music in the distance.

Eddie smiled to hear the David Bowie tape playing, and when Richie saw his face, he stopped talking, and then grinned, too.

"Hey shithheads, you better not be having too much fun without us!" Richie yelled, and he ran into the barrens with Eddie following behind him, laughing.

Between the time spent at the arcade and on the walk, it was dusk when they got into the clearing, and the sun starting to go down meant you could actually see the lights. The lanterns and lights were all hung around the trees, and the blankets were laid all around the ground, just like Eddie had asked - it looked like something out of a picture. The whole area seemed to glow.

The food was laid out on some rocks, so that it wasn't on the ground, and Mike and Ben sat near it, talking. Bill and Bev were by the

stereo, dancing, and Stan was reading, seated under the tree with the lights. Eddie could see where the projector was set up, pointed at a broken off concrete wall, but since the movie hadn't started yet, he was pretty sure Richie hadn't noticed it.

Everything was perfect.

He looked over at Richie's face, and saw him smiling.

"Holy shit, guys. This looks nicer than my fucking bedroom."

"That's not saying much, I've seen your bedroom," Stan said without looking up.

Eddie laughed, and Bev paused the music as nearly everyone joined in the laughter.

Richie seemed to finally catch sight of Bev, and his smile widened. "Bev! Shit!"

He ran over, and pulled her into a hug, and she picked him up and spun him around. They laughed together, and Richie pressed an obnoxious kiss to her cheek.

Eddie looked around at everyone again, and for a moment he was overwhelmed just by how much he loved all of his friends, and how grateful he was to have met all of them.

After a moment, he shook himself and walked over to talk to Bill while Bev and Richie caught up. "Hey. Thanks for setting everything up. It looks perfect."

Bill smiled and shrugged. "Everyone h-h-helped. Ben got the projector and Bev f-figured out where to put the lights. It was a good idea. He looks r-really happy, Eddie."

Eddie just smiled and blushed a little, glad that Bill thought his plan seemed to have worked out, too.

It wasn't long before Bev put the music back on, and she and Richie were dancing. Bill got Mike to join in, and Ben followed. Eddie had to physically pull Stan over, but once he loosened up a little and smiled,

Eddie managed to relax and enjoy himself, too.

A few songs later, Bev switched the tapes, and the sounds of Tears for Fears filled the air. Eddie felt someone yanking at him, and then Richie had pulled him into his arms.

“Come dance with me, Eds!”

“This is barely dancing,” Eddie said - and it was true. Richie was mostly yanking him around to the tune of Shout, but Eddie was still grinning as he said it.

He started laughing, and Richie smiled back at him - and then Mike and Bill were dancing, and so were Ben and Stan, and Bev was just watching them all make idiots out of themselves with a smile on her face.

Eventually the dancing started to wind down, and Richie was just sort of leaning against Eddie and swaying when he said, “Anyone else hungry?”

“Does that mean it’s time for the cake?” Mike asked.

Eddie went over and picked it up, and Stan opened the box and put in the candles before they revealed it to Richie.

The top of the cake said HAPPY BIRTHDAY, TRASHMOUTH! in big, red letters, and when Richie read it, he laughed. “Yeah, great, thanks. You guys are the worst fucking friends.”

“I think you mean the best,” Ben piped up.

Bev lit the candles with a lighter she had in her back pocket, and they all watched as Richie blew out the candles in one big breath.

“Did you make a wish?” Eddie asked. He was still standing closest to Richie, since he was the one holding the cake.

Richie lifted up his head, and their eyes met. He blinked a few times, then looked surprisingly embarrassed. “Oh. Yeah. Of course.” Then he winked, and it was obvious he was back to being the same old Richie. “Can’t wish and tell, right Eds?”

“Don’t make me push this entire cake in your face.”

“Sounds fun.”

Eddie rolled his eyes and set the cake back down so Stan could cut it into equal pieces for everyone. Richie claimed the first piece - a corner piece with an absurd amount of icing.

Once everyone had been served, and taken their seats on the blankets, Eddie looked at Ben. “Should we start the movie, then?”

“Yeah, sure!”

“A movie? Out here?” Richie asked.

“Just shut up, Rich, and you’ll see,” Eddie replied. He shoved at Richie until he was facing the wall, and when Ben set up the projector and got it going, there was utter silence for just a moment.

Then the Columbia Pictures screen came up, and the creepy synthesizer music started playing, and as soon as the New York Public Library showed up on screen, Richie yelled, “Holy shit!” and nearly shoved Eddie off the blanket.

“Watch it, asshole.”

Richie was practically bouncing where he sat, and he looked over at Ben. “Was this you?”

“Not just me,” Ben said with a smile.

It was then that Richie pulled Eddie back to his side and put an arm around him. “C’mere, Eddie Spaghetti, I know you at least had something to do with the movie selection.” Richie kissed him on the cheek, and Eddie blushed even though he tried not to, and he could see Bev grinning at him out of the corner of his eye.

He flipped her off discreetly, and she laughed.

“Hey, hush up Molly Ringwald, we’re not even to the funny part yet.”

“Yeah, alright, cool it, trashmouth. It may be your birthday, but I

could still beat you up.”

“That you could.”

Richie and Bev smiled at each other, and Richie still didn't let go of Eddie. Slowly accepting his fate, Eddie just leaned against Richie's side and made himself comfortable - even though his chest hurt and he vaguely sort of thought he might be having a heart attack, because while Richie shoved or poked or hugged him, or gave him jokey kisses on the cheek, they'd never just outright cuddled before. Sitting close at a normal movie night usually involved being comfortably close, shoulders brushing, knees pressed together where Eddie had his legs curled up on the couch. It didn't ever mean he got to rest his head on Richie's shoulder like this - but then again, Eddie absolutely wasn't going to complain.

From the first moment in Venkman's office, Richie started muttering lines under his breath. Eddie was pressed so close he could hear him. It was hardly a surprise, but it was still utterly endearing. Eddie started muttering the lines he knew, too, even though it was hard as his heart sped up again when Richie would whisper things like, “I'm gonna go for broke, I am madly in love with you.”

Some lines all the losers would shout together - though a part of that was definitely Richie's influence. He knew that Stan didn't even care that much for the movie, but he was still talking along when everyone in tandem went “Ray, when someone asks you if you're a god, you say yes!”

When the movie ended, Eddie was still pressed against Richie's side, only they'd ended up almost laying down, with Eddie half on top of Richie.

Eddie didn't really want to move, but everyone else started to get up, so Eddie did, too, standing and stretching. Everyone was still smiling and laughing.

Richie was still sitting down, and Eddie looked at him to see that he was smiling, but he looked sort of serious for once.

He looked from person to person, his gaze sticking on Eddie, so the

two of them were making eye contact. "Guys, this is... this is the best fucking birthday ever. Thank you. Really. I don't even know where to start."

"Well you should probably thank E-Eddie. It was h-h-his idea."

Eddie felt, for only one brief moment, like he might punch Bill Denbrough in the face. He wouldn't of course, because he loved Bill, Bill had been his first best friend, but that had been the one thing he really, really hadn't wanted Richie to find out. He knew that he was blushing, and that Richie was probably still looking at him, and saw it.

As soon as he'd said it, Bill had looked apologetic, like he'd known even without being told that maybe he shouldn't have said it after all. Eddie could hardly stay mad, so he just sighed and looked at the ground to avoid everyone's glances.

"I'll... keep that in mind." Richie's voice was surprisingly quiet. "I guess you guys should all be heading home, right?"

"Y-yeah, Bev's gonna stay at mine for the n-night. W-we'll see you guys later." Richie hugged Beverly, and Bill, and they both waved and headed out in Bev's truck, taking the lights and stereo with them.

Mike said goodbye next, then Stan, then Ben, packing up the projector. Then only Richie and Eddie were left, with Eddie picking up the box that had the rest of Richie's cake in it - holding it like it would shield him somehow from the fact that Richie knew Eddie was the one who'd planned everything, and put this whole ridiculous night together.

"You headed home, too, Eddie Spaghetti?"

"I'm not letting you keep getting away with that one even when it is your birthday, Richie. But... yes. I am. I should. My mom's probably gonna have a stroke as it is."

"I'll walk with you."

It wasn't a complete surprise that Richie offered to walk him home - it happened most of the time, and they'd walked to the barrens

together to start with, after all. It was also half of the reason Eddie had picked up Richie's cake - he'd had a feeling they'd leave in the same direction at the very least.

He didn't even get a real break of silence before Richie started.

"Was what Bill said true? Did you plan all of that?"

"Well, that's... I mean, mostly. Obviously I couldn't set it up because I was with you all afternoon, but I was. Involved."

"Was it your idea?"

"I... had some ideas."

"Eds."

"Don't - ugh, yes, fine. Look, after we talked today I just had some good ideas, so since we'd all been planning to get together anyways, I just. Told Bill some stuff to set up, and I. Gave him all the stuff he'd need and then I took you to do stuff all afternoon so everything could get set up. Yes. But Ben found the projector, I didn't even know if he could, I just had an idea, okay?"

"And Bev?"

"I might have called her today."

"Did you ask her to come down?"

"She said she would before I asked."

Eddie looked over, and Richie looked. Off. Not as happy as before. Eddie very abruptly felt awful. Richie had looked happy all afternoon, but now it seemed like either it hadn't been enough or that something about finding this out had spoiled the day. "Look, I'm... I thought it would. Help. I thought you'd like it. I'm sorry you found out it was my idea, I know it's... weird that I put all this work into it, I just. I wanted you to. Have a good birthday. I probably should have just left things and we all would have gone to the quarry, and you would have had fun still, and it wouldn't be so..."

"I mean it, this was the best birthday I've ever had."

"That's really not what your face is saying right now, Rich."

"Oh." Richie stopped walking, so Eddie paused beside him. "Well I just... So there's no particular reason it was you that took me to the arcade and stuff? It wasn't... Part of the plan?"

"Well I don't... I wanted to take you to stuff I knew you like. I thought it was good. You love the arcade. And you love ice cream. And I didn't wanna spend the whole afternoon by myself setting up, and I didn't want you to think I was running off, and Bev wasn't in town yet, and I. Would you rather me have gotten Bev here sooner? I had that idea sort of late, I'm sorry."

"No, that's not what I meant. Sorry, Eds, just ignore me."

"I don't get it. Why are you upset?"

"I'm not upset."

"Something's wrong, Rich. I said I'm sorry, I don't... I don't really know what else I can do, I can't take the whole thing back."

"Eddie, don't."

Eddie felt, suddenly, like he might cry. Which was stupid. It wasn't his birthday. It was Richie's. He'd just really wanted things to be perfect - and now they were. Wrong. Weird. Awful, frankly. "Here, just. Just let me give you your cake and I'll go the rest of the way home alone, I don't know where I messed up, but I don't."

"Do you want another piece?"

"What?"

"Do you... You could stop by my place, and we could have more cake or. Just. Hang out some more."

"...Why? Are you not upset with me? I don't really understand what's going on."

“...Why did you take me to the arcade? Why was it you?”

“Well I. It’s just sort of how it happened. Like I said. And I wanted to spend time with you, on your birthday, to make sure you had a good birthday. I wasn’t... trying to guess who your favorite person to do all that stuff with would have been. I guess that was selfish of me. I’m... I mean I know if that had been the goal, I. I don’t know who I would have picked.”

“Not you?”

“...I don’t know. Richie, that wasn’t the point, I didn’t...”

“Eds.” Richie took the cake box from Eddie and put it down, and then he was stepping closer, and putting his hands on Eddie’s shoulders. Eddie blinked up at him. “You’re my favorite. You would have guessed right.”

Richie said things like that jokingly to Eddie all the time, but Eddie had never seen him get so serious about it. He felt warmth rise to his cheeks, and he smiled a little before he looked down. “Well. Um. Good? I guess. You probably shouldn’t tell the rest of the losers you’ve got a favorite, though, might really mess with the dynamic.”

“Oh come on, everyone knows you’re my favorite.”

The jokey tone was back, but it was still different now that Eddie knew for sure that Richie meant it. He looked back up and caught Richie grinning at him, so he smiled right back.

“Am I your favorite?”

Eddie sputtered. “Are you serious? You’re gonna ask me that, after tonight? I skipped school to go buy all that stuff-”

“You skipped class?”

“This is so not the first time I’ve skipped classes for you.”

“For me, huh?”

Eddie flushed a little, and his heart sped up. “Yes, you idiot. For you.

And yes, you're obviously my favorite. Are we going to your place or not?"

"Can I... do something first?"

"...Do what?"

"Promise not to get mad at me?"

"I don't promise that, if you make a fucking joke about my mom right now I'm going to punch you in the face, Rich, I swear to God."

"I don't give a shit about your mom," Richie said quietly.

Then he leaned in, and he and Eddie were kissing. Maybe it shouldn't have been such a surprise, after all the touching and the cuddling and the dancing, but it was. Eddie was frozen, standing there with his eyes wide open until Richie pulled back.

"I... sorry. I just wanted to... Guess I wasted a wish, huh?"

"If that was your wish it already came true," Eddie said, only the words sort of escaped when he wasn't even thinking about them.

"Not really," Richie said, and his eyes were sad, and his whole face looked sort of hollow, and Eddie shook his head.

"Oh my god, just shut up," Eddie said back, and then he slid his hands around the curve of Richie's jaw, on either side of his face, and he leaned up and kissed him.

It was Richie's turn to freeze, but that faded, and then he had his hands on Eddie's back, and was holding him close while they breathed into each other's mouths in between soft, lingering kisses.

"You still taste like that fucking cotton candy ice cream, how is that possible," Eddie muttered, and Richie started laughing into his mouth, which was better than anything Eddie had ever imagined.

Enough presence of mind returned that Eddie realized they were by the side of the road. He pulled back and sighed. "We should get back to your place," he told Richie. "I mean we should. If you want."

Richie grabbed Eddie's hand and squeezed it, then picked the cake box back up with his other hand. "Yeah, come on. Let's go."

"Was that really what you wished for?" Eddie asked.

"Well what's the point of living Sixteen Candles if I don't get my own Jake Ryan?"

"Are you saying we need a whole new cake and more candles so we can kiss over that?"

"Mm, I'll take what I've got. You're better than Jake Ryan anyways, Eds."

Eddie snorted, because that was ridiculous."Oh shut up, idiot." But then he still blushed, and couldn't quite manage to fight down a smile.

Richie grinned back at him, and they kept walking, hand in hand.

Author's Note:

this fic ended up being so much longer than i ever intended kljsadf but anyways! i'm back with more richie and eddie watch movies bc apparently that's the only kind of fic i write now. i kid but lkjasdf boy i have some predictable interests. sorry if you've read both of my fics and the beginning seems a little similar? i actually started this fic before that one and only just finished so there's some unintentional overlap in the setup. otherwise i hope you enjoyed! as always my It tumblr is eddykaspbraks if you wanna hit me up there or see my It thoughts and posts or send me a prompt or whatever! i'm still working on several more reddie fics already though klajsdjf including some cheesy 80s movie aus and one big giant fic that i'm sure i'll finish eventually someday